

At a time when our country is struggling with energy shortages, electric bikes are not only energy-efficient, they reduce the consumption of gasoline.

Currently, electric bikes are subjected to the same standards as motor vehicles and must comply with all of the same safety standards as motor vehicles.

This level of regulatory burden is unnecessary and has a dampening effect on the availability of these bicycles.

Regulation under the Consumer Products Safety Commission ensures that bicycles continue to meet rigorous safety standards while increasing their availability to consumers.

I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this bill and encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation.

Mr. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 727. This legislation, which the House unanimously passed last October (H.R. 2592) but which the Senate neglected to consider, will transfer regulatory responsibility for low-speed electric bicycles from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), where they would be treated as consumer products. During the 106th Congress, a representative from the NHTSA testified to Congress that if the agency strictly applied its motor vehicle safety regulations to electric bicycles, such bikes would have to include a number of costly safety features—including headlights, brake lights, turn signals, rearview mirrors and license plates—even if the bikes are used in the same manner as human-powered bicycles.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense measure that will enhance the role of the CPSC. The Commission needs to be granted the authority, when appropriate, to protect consumers and ensure public safety. Along these lines, I have introduced the Children's Gasoline Burn Prevention Act (H.R. 688), which will enable the CPSC to require child-proof caps for gasoline containers.

Under current law, the CPSC lacks the authority to promulgate such regulations, due to the definition of "package" in the Poison Prevention Packaging Act. Under that statute, in order for the CPSC to require a child-proof cap, the package must contain a hazardous substance at the time of initial sale; therefore, the CPSC does not have authority to require safety caps for new, empty gas containers. This problem came to my attention due to an incident in Leavenworth, Kansas, in which a four year old boy lost his life and his three year old brother was permanently scarred after they opened and spilled a gas can and the gasoline vapors ignited a nearby hot water heater.

This legislation has been endorsed by the American Society of Testing and Materials' Task Group of Standards for Flammable Liquid Containers, which has been considering establishment of a voluntary standard in this area, working in concert with the CPSC.

Enactment of this simple, common-sense measure will save the lives of countless young children, and help to put their parents' minds at ease with regard to gasoline cans stored in garages, basements and back porches.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 727 and the Children's Gasoline

Burn Prevention Act. The Consumer Product Safety Commission must be allowed to adequately protect consumers and ensure public safety.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 727, legislation that gives the Consumer Product Safety Commission authority to regulate low-speed electric bicycles. This common-sense bill had its genesis in a meeting I had several years ago with Dr. Malcolm Currie, president of a company in my district called Currie Technologies. Dr. Currie made a convincing case that National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regulations—which place electric bikes in the same category as mopeds—were restraining the growth of the electric bike industry. He argued that NHTSA should apply a unique set of safety requirements to electric bikes, given the modest speed at which they operate. NHTSA agreed in principle, but had little flexibility to make such a distinction in the context of their regulations. After a number of discussions with NHTSA, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Representative LOIS CAPPS, Dr. Currie and other representatives of the electric bicycle industry, it became apparent that the best way to deal with this problem was to transfer regulatory jurisdiction from NHTSA to the CPSC, which already regulates regular human-powered bicycles. H.R. 727 would provide for that transfer of regulatory authority. I commend Mr. STEARNS for introducing this bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 727.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1430

2001 TRADE POLICY AGENDA AND 2000 ANNUAL REPORT ON TRADE AGREEMENTS PROGRAM—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-48)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2213), I transmit herewith the 2001 Trade Policy Agenda and 2000 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 6, 2001.

PERIODIC REPORT ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS PAYMENTS MADE TO CUBA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104-114, 110 Stat. 785, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), I transmit herewith a semi-annual report detailing payments made to Cuba by United States persons as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 6, 2001.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at 6 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on motions to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 724, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 727, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.